

Title

Internet-based clearinghouse service for freight services

Description

1. This invention generally describes an internet-based freight advertising system, which increases the efficiency of delivery, due to the price transparency for all parties and due to the opportunity to fill up empty transport vehicles on their return trips.
2. The claim considers the fact that many transportation conveyances (e.g. trucks, ships, airlines and trains) return empty to their departure points. A coordinating platform can connect through the worldwide internet all parties requiring or offering freight service. This patent covers the application of such a system.
3. On the one hand, parties, who are looking for transportation from a certain location to a certain destination can use this program to enter all freight data. The program generates a list of contacts with all prospective business associates by comparing a request with all offers entered from freight forwarders of other users. On the other hand, freight forwards, railways or other companies, who offer such a freight service, can look for a freight opportunity in the system in the same way.
4. The application will be displayed by the example as follows:
 - 4.1 User A enters the system through an URL (e.g. <http://freight-service.xx>). User A needs to be registered by entering all identification information, including its contact information (e.g. e-mail, mailing address, etc.).
 - 4.2 User A receives an e-mail with a password confirmation.
 - 4.3 User A enters the program by entering its user ID and password.
 - 4.4 User A selects, if it is seeking or offering freight services.
 - 4.5 User A selects the geographical departure point of the freight (e.g. from: North America/ USA/ New York).
 - 4.6 User A selects the destination of the good (e.g. to: Europe/ Italy/ Bergamo).
 - 4.7 User A selects the time and date of delivery (e.g. on: 10/24/2007) or
 - 4.8 User A selects a time frame for delivery (e.g. between 10/23/2007 and 10/26/2007).
 - 4.9 User A may mark the type of goods to be transported (e.g. break bulk)
 - 4.10 In order to avoid too restrictive research information, which might give only a few results, the user may enter an acceptable alternative route expressed in terms of chargeable mileage. Otherwise another user B, that is offering nearly the same freight service from New York to Milan (next to Bergamo) would not be informed

of the search demand of user A. For example, user A may enter a maximum acceptable detour of 50 miles in order to cover other departure and destination points around New York and Bergamo.

- 4.11 User A will click the >search< button.
 - 4.12 The program will generate a results list, where all other users appear that entered information that matches the search criteria of user A.
 - 4.13 User A is able to contact one of the parties on the results list (e.g. by clicking on the e-mail address contained directly, or indirectly, by a link in this information).
 - 4.14 Users A and B (matching users) may exchange further information (e.g. by phone)
 - 4.15 If there is no matching user, user A may have the opportunity to click an icon indicating: "inform me of a future match" and will receive counterpart contact addresses (e.g. via e-mail) about all future matching users.
5. The system is comparable to advertisements in a newspaper. The difference to this is that the clearinghouse takes advantage of the internet by comparing and combining given data and by forwarding the results directly to the advertiser.